

State regulation of opticians
(HB 651 by Berlanga/Jones)

DIGEST: HB 651 would have created a system of regulating and licensing opticians. It would have created a schedule of registration fees, standards of competency and enforcement by the Texas Department of Health.

REASONS
FOR VETO: The governor said he saw no need for licensing opticians since they merely fill prescriptions written by ophthalmologists or optometrists. "The marketplace has done a good of determining which opticians are doing a good job."

AUTHOR'S
VIEW: The veto of HB 651 was "most unfortunate," said Rep. Hugo Berlanga. It will deny consumers any means or method to distinguish the honest and competent opticians from the unqualified and/or greedy providers. The governor's statement concerning the marketplace as a consumer protection tool is "absolutely incredible" and shows a clear lack of understanding and awareness of this issue.

The veto will also ignores the fact that registration fees would have paid for the bill so that it would not have placed any added demands upon the state's budget, Rep. Berlanga said.

NOTES: The House Research Organization analysis of HB 651 appeared in the May 18, 1987 Daily Floor Report.